PM1.14/2:let 308-13

Office of Personnel Management

Federal Personnel Manual System

FPM Letter 308-13

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RETAIN UNTIL SUPERSEDED

SUBJECT: Acceptance of Volunteer Service

Washington, D.C. 20415
February 5, 1979

Heads of Departments and Independent Establishments: Action Date: March 12, 1979

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1. The Civil Service Reform Act of 1978, Public Law 95-454, authorized Federal departments and agencies to establish programs designed to provide educationally related work assignments for students in nonpay status, effective January 11, 1979. For the first time, most agencies will be able to accept the services of student volunteers without pay.

2. The act provides that, notwithstanding restrictions published in section 3679(b) of Revised Statutes (31 U.S.C. 665(b)), heads of agencies may accept, subject to regulations issued by the Office of Personnel Management, volunteer service for the United States if the service (1) is performed by a student, with permission of the institution at which the student is enrolled, as part of an agency's program established for the purpose of providing educational experiences for students; (2) is to be uncompensated; and (3) will not displace any employee. For most purposes, students in such programs will not be considered Federal employees.

3. This letter transmits a copy of subchapter 7 to FPM chapter 308 which provides interim guidelines for agency use in developing programs for acceptance of volunteer service. These guidelines are designed to give agencies the necessary flexibilities to develop programs for accomplishing the objective of the act.

4. If you foresee difficulties in following the guidelines, please inform us as promptly as possible. Written comments must be received no later than March 12, 1979.

Jule Sugarman

Jule M. Sugarman
Deputy Director

Attachment

Inquiries: Recruitment/Agency Services Branch, 632-5678

Code: 308, Student Employment and Work-Study Programs

Distribution: FPM

Subchapter 7: Acceptance of Volunteer Service

7-1 Purpose

The Civil Service Reform Act of 1978, Public Law 95-454, section 301 (5 U.S.C. 3111), authorized Federal departments and agencies to accept on behalf of the United States Government volunteer service. This chapter provides general guidance for agencies establishing educationally related work assignments for students in a nonpay status.

7-2 Definitions

As used in this chapter:

(1) "Volunteer Service" under 5 U.S.C. 3111 is limited to services performed by a student, with the permission of the institution at which the student is enrolled, as part of an agency program established for the purpose of providing educational experience for the student. Such student service is to be uncompensated and will not be used to displace any employee or to staff a vacancy which is a normal part of the agency's work force.

(2) A "student" is an individual who is enrolled not less than half-time in a high school, trade school, technical or vocational institute, junior college, college, university, or comparable recognized educational institutions. An individual who is a student is deemed not to have ceased to be a student during an interim between school years if that period is not more than 5 months and if the student demonstrates to the satisfaction of the agency that he or she has a firm intention of continuing to pursue a course of study or training in the same or different educational institution during the school term immediately after the interim period of absence. Students enrolled in correspondence courses, those auditing courses without credit, and those enrolled in short-term nonaccredited programs do not qualify under this definition.

(3) "Half-time student" is one enrolled in and carrying any combination of courses, research projects or special studies which meets one half or 50 percent of the academic workload standards and practices of the institution in which the student is enrolled. In case of doubt as to whether or not the student meets this statutory requirement, agencies should accept a written certification from the student's school that he or she is enrolled half-time under its academic program.

(4) "Agreement" is a written document developed jointly between the school and agency to outline the responsibilities of each organization. It should also be used to identify the conditions or limitations under which students may receive unpaid career-related experience. Included in such agreements should be the method, mutually agreed upon by each organization, for maintenance of attendance and performance records, particularly if the career-related assignment is for purpose of course credit.

7-3 Objectives

The acceptance of student volunteer service enables departments and agencies to contribute significantly to the enrichment of educational programs. In addition to enriching the educational process, program objectives are:

(1) To bring about a stronger relationship between the efforts of educators and the occupational needs of Federal employers and students.

(2) To provide opportunities for students to become involved in early career exploration as a basis for making realistic decisions regarding their future careers.

(3) To provide exposure to the work environment as a means of encouraging students to develop work ethics and to acquaint them with various Federal missions.

(4) To encourage student interest in new or developing occupations and professions.

(5) To support affirmative action programs, through a career awareness approach, to assure that ethnic and racial minorities, women and the handicapped are informed of occupations available within Government.

7-4 Volunteer Service Agreements

General guidance. Each agency is authorized to develop student volunteer programs best suited to meet its needs. It is recommended, however, based upon past experience with other student programs, that volunteer programs be conducted through written agreements with educational institutions or with organizations officially designated by schools or boards of education to coordinate the placement of students in nonpaid work assignments. The administrative level at which agreements are executed is a matter for agency determination. Agency headquarters should issue instructions to their field activities to assure that agreements developed at these levels are consistent with agency policy.

Agreements should provide the basis of mutual understanding between agencies and schools or the schools designated representatives in matters relating to Federal programs. They should identify agency and school responsibilities and conditions or limitations under which students will participate. Additionally, the agreement should make clear that authorization to engage in such programs is limited by statute to students enrolled in school; that volunteer service is with the permission of the institution in which students are enrolled; that such service is to be uncompensated, and that students participating are not considered to be Federal employees.

7-5 Student Eligibility and Status

A. Age. Volunteer service should be in accordance with appropriate Federal, State, and local laws and standards on using the services of minors.

B. Status. Students participating under agency programs are not considered to be Federal employees for any purpose other than for purposes:

(1) Of the Federal Tort Claims provisions published in 28 U.S.C., 2671 through 2680. Claims arising as a result of student participation should be referred to the Department of Justice.

(2) Of title 5, U.S.C. chapter 81, relative to compensation for injuries sustained during the performance of work assignments. Claims related to injuries should be referred to the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs, U.S. Department of Labor for adjudication.

7-6 Documentation of Service

A. General. Although student volunteers are not Federal employees, their service is creditable for competitive examination purposes and participating schools, particularly those which award credit for service, may require certification of periods of service. In light of this, volunteer service should be documented on the Standard Form 50 (SF 50), "Notification of Personnel Action," or OPM approved exception, thereto, completed as shown on exhibits A and B in appendix C, to FPM chapter 308. Copies of SF 50 should not be forwarded to the Office of Personnel Management nor should agencies transmit data on student volunteers to the Central Personnel Data Files (CPDF). Each SF 50 must carry the remark: "Under 5 U.S.C. 3111, a student volunteer is not a Federal employee for any purposes other than injury compensation and laws related to the Tort Claims Act. Service is not creditable for leave accrual or any other employee benefits."

B. Appointment. Student volunteer appointments will be documented as Volunteer Service - without compensation.

C. Separations. When the period of volunteer service has ended, an SF 50 must be prepared to show termination (not resignation). The SF 50 should also include under item 30, "Remarks," a statement of the total service in hours or days rendered between the appointment and separation dates.

D. Records. For each student volunteer, agencies should establish an Official Personnel Folder (OPF) to contain copies of appointment and termination SF 50s, resume of student volunteer, and a brief statement of services performed. These documents should be filed on the right (permanent) side of the OPF. When volunteer service is terminated, the OPF should be sent to the National Personnel Records Center, following the instructions in FPM Supplement 293-31.

E. Service Record Cards. An agency may, if it wishes, prepare an SF 7, service record card or similar document to record appointment and termination of student volunteers. If an SF 7 or similar agency record is parpared, it must be annotated to show that periods of service were not Federal employment.

7-7 Reporting

While no formal reporting requirements are established at this time, it may be necessary to request data subsequently from agencies. We do not know what form such reports may take but agencies ought to be prepared to provide the following information:

(1) Academic Level - data should reflect information to show if student is enrolled in, (1) high school, (2) trade school, (3) vocational or technical institution, (4) junior college (Associate Degree), (5) college (Baccalaureate Degree), (6) graduate school or comparable recognized educational institutions.

(2) Academic discipline (See FPM Supplement 292-1)

(3) Duty station (by State) (See GSA worldwide geographic location codes, November 1976)

(4) Sex

(5) Race or ethnic background (See FPM chapter 713, section 3)

7-8 Program Evaluation

Evaluation. Each agency should schedule periodic reviews and evaluations of their student volunteer programs. Such reviews should form the basis for establishing future program objectives. The review should include:

(1) Careful assessments of program in terms of its compliance with 5 U.S.C. 3111 and agency instructions.

(2) Evaluation of the program in terms of the agency's own goals and objectives.

7-9 Program Implementation

A. Program responsibility. Each agency should designate a member of its staff of its central and major subordinate organizations to keep currently informed on student volunteer programs. The responsibilities of such staff should include the promulgation of internal instructions and to serve as the focal point of contact with schools and other institutions interested in assigning students in nonpaid internships.

B. Field Advisory Service. Agency field activities should be kept informed of new developments or changes in agency policy. Additionally, each field activity should designate a member of its staff to carry out the primary responsibilities for the program and to serve as liaison with officials of educational institutions.

C. Public Affairs. Coverage of student volunteer programs should be included in public information and public relations activities of agencies whenever appropriate.

7-10 Relationship to Other Student Programs

Departments and agencies have for a number of years actively supported student employment programs, i.e., summer employment, programs for needy youths and cooperative education programs authorized under provisions of E.O. 12015. Agencies are reminded that each of these programs have specific objectives and should continue to receive active support.

With the enactment of section 301 of the Civil Service Reform Act of 1978, which authorized the acceptance of volunteer service, both school officials and agency representatives have expressed apprehensions that less emphasis will be given to the established student employment programs. The real concern relates to the fact that most students in school today need the earnings from employment to subsidize educational expenses. Additionally, they expressed concern regarding the possibility of morale problems if students, both volunteer and those paid for service rendered,were simultaneously scheduled and given the same duty assignments; therefore, agencies should make every effort to design volunteer programs to avoid conflict with established student employment programs.

The Federal Government, as an employer, in supporting employment programs for students has provided an example of outstanding leadership for other employers within our economy. Agencies are urged to continue the support of all student programs.

EXHIBIT A

STANDARD FORM 50—Rev. December 1961
U.S. Civil Service Commission
FPM Chap. 295

NOTIFICATION OF PERSONNEL ACTION

(EMPLOYEE — See General Information on Reverse)

FPM Ltr. 308-13

(FOR AGENCY USE)

[For circled items, fill in actual data pertaining to Volunteer or Agency]

1. NAME (CAPS) LAST—FIRST—MIDDLE MR.—MISS—MRS.	2. (FOR AGENCY USE)	3. BIRTH DATE (Mo., Day, Year)	4. SOCIAL SECURITY NO

5. VETERAN PREFERENCE	6. TENURE GROUP	7. SERVICE COMP DATE	
0 (1—NO, 2—5 PT., 3—10 PT. DISAB, 4—10 PT. COMP., 5—10 PT OTHER)	0	00-00-00	

9. FEGLI	10. RETIREMENT	11 (FOR CSC USE)
2 (1—COVERED (Regular only—declined Optional), 2—INELIGIBLE, 3—WAIVED, 4—COVERED (Reg & Opt))	4 (1—CS, 2—FICA, 3—FS, 4—NONE, 5—OTHER)	

12. CODE	NATURE OF ACTION	13. EFFECTIVE DATE (Mo., Day, Year)	14. CIVIL SERVICE OR OTHER LEGAL AUTHORITY
	Voluntary Service - Without Compensation		5 U.S.C. 3111

15. FROM: POSITION TITLE AND NUMBER	16. PAY PLAN AND OCCUPATION CODE	17 (a) GRADE OR LEVEL (b) STEP OR RATE	18. SALARY

19. NAME AND LOCATION OF EMPLOYING OFFICE

20. POSITION TITLE AND NUMBER	21. PAY PLAN AND OCCUPATION CODE	22. (a) GRADE OR LEVEL (b) STEP OR RATE	23. SALARY
Student Volunteer			

24. NAME AND LOCATION OF EMPLOYING OFFICE

25. DUTY STATION (City—county—State)	26. LOCATION CODE

27. APPROPRIATION	28. POSITION OCCUPIED	29. APPORTIONED POSITION
	1—COMPETITIVE SERVICE 2 2—EXCEPTED SERVICE	FROM: TO: STATE (1—PROVED-1, 2—WAIVED-2)

30. REMARKS: [ ] A. SUBJECT TO COMPLETION OF 1 YEAR PROBATIONARY (OR TRIAL) PERIOD COMMENCING _____

[ ] B. SERVICE COUNTING TOWARD CAREER (OR PERMANENT) TENURE FROM: _____

SEPARATIONS: SHOW REASONS BELOW, AS REQUIRED CHECK IF APPLICABLE: [ ] C. DURING PROBATION

Expected to work (number) hours per week.

Under 5 U.S.C. 3111 a Student Volunteer is NOT a Federal employee for any purposes other than injury compensation or laws related to tort claims act. Service is not creditable for leave accrual or any other employee benefits.

31. DATE OF APPOINTMENT AFFIDAVIT (Accessions only)	34. SIGNATURE (Or other authentication) AND TITLE
32. OFFICE MAINTAINING PERSONNEL FOLDER (If different from employing office)	
33. CODE EMPLOYING DEPARTMENT OR AGENCY	35. DATE

5 PART
50 -133

1. EMPLOYEE COPY

UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA
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STANDARD FORM 50—Rev. December 1961
U.S. Civil Service Commission
FPM Chap. 295

NOTIFICATION OF PERSONNEL ACTION

(EMPLOYEE — See General Information on Reverse)

(FOR AGENCY USE)

[For circled items, fill in actual data pertaining to Volunteer or Agency]

1. NAME (CAPS) LAST—FIRST—MIDDLE MR.—MISS—MRS.	2. (FOR AGENCY USE)	3. BIRTH DATE (Mo., Day, Year)	4. SOCIAL SECURITY NO

5. VETERAN PREFERENCE	6. TENURE GROUP	7. SERVICE COMP DATE	
0 (1—NO 2—5 PT. 3—10 PT. DISAB 4—10 PT COMP. 5—10 PT. OTHER)	0	00-00-00	

9. FEGLI	10. RETIREMENT	11 (FOR CSC USE)
2 (1—COVEREO (Regular only—declined Optional) 2—INELIGIBLE 3—WAIVEO 4—COVEREO (Reg & Opt.))	4 (1—CS 2—FICA 3—FS 4—NONE 5—OTHER)	

12. CODE	NATURE OF ACTION	13. EFFECTIVE DATE (Mo., Day, Year)	14. CIVIL SERVICE OR OTHER LEGAL AUTHORITY
	Termination		

15. FROM: POSITION TITLE AND NUMBER	16. PAY PLAN AND OCCUPATION CODE	17 (a) GRADE OR LEVEL (b) STEP OR RATE	18. SALARY
Student Volunteer			

19. NAME AND LOCATION OF EMPLOYING OFFICE

20. POSITION TITLE AND NUMBER	21. PAY PLAN AND OCCUPATION CODE	22. (a) GRADE OR LEVEL (b) STEP OR RATE	23 SALARY

24. NAME AND LOCATION OF EMPLOYING OFFICE

25. DUTY STATION (City—county—State)	26. LOCATION CODE

27. APPROPRIATION	28. POSITION OCCUPIED	29. APPORTIONED POSITION
	1—COMPETITIVE SERVICE 2 2—EXCEPTED SERVICE	FROM (1—PROVED-1 2—WAIVED-2) TO: STATE

30. REMARKS:
A. SUBJECT TO COMPLETION OF 1 YEAR PROBATIONARY (OR TRIAL) PERIOD COMMENCING
B. SERVICE COUNTING TOWARO CAREER (OR PERMANENT) TENURE FROM:

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35. DATE

5 PART
50 -133

1. EMPLOYEE COPY

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